VALLEY FREE PRESS

THE LEHIGH VALLEY'S
GAY & LESBIAN OPINION & NEWSPAPER

VOL. 5 NO. 3 APRIL 2002

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION AMENDMENT INTRODUCED IN ALLENTOWN CITY COUNCIL

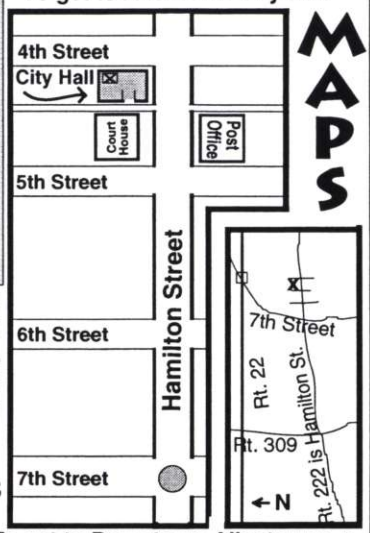
ITS PASSAGE MAY DEPEND ON YOU!!!

The Amendment of sexual orientation, gender, and gender identity to the Allentown Human Relations Ordinance has been introduced by City Councilperson Gail Hoover, seconded and moved to committee. It will be discussed in a public committee meeting on April 2nd. The meeting begins at 7:00 PM. Then we believe it will be voted on by City Council on April 3rd. That meeting begins at 7:30 PM.

PLEASE ATTEND THE MEETINGS ON APRIL 2ND AND 3RD
ARRIVE EARLY & BRING FRIENDS
SEE MORE INFORMATION ON PAGE 7

MAPS

To get to Allentown City Hall



To get to Downtown Allentown

MCC'S EASTER

The Metropolitan Community Church's Easter Service will be on March 31, at 5:50 p.m., in the church Sanctuary, 424 Center St., Bethlehem. "A Resurrection Celebration," features musical selections, Procession of Lilies and MCCLV pastor Rev. Elizabeth Goudy's sermon titled, "Authorization to Franchise." Celebrate Easter at the LV's GLBTA church!

STEVE BLACK RUNS FOR DEM. STATE COMMITTEE IN NORTHAMPTON COUNTY

ALLYSON HAMM RUNS FOR DEM. STATE COMMITTEE IN LEHIGH COUNTY

SEE PAGE 5 FOR DETAILS

PRIDE CHANGES DATE OF FESTIVAL TO APRIL 23

Pride of LV is always trying to please. They listened when people wanted the festival on a Sunday. So Pride scheduled it on June 16. They listened again when there were concerns about that being Father's Day. So the festival date has been changed from June 16 to June 23. Read more about the Pride Festival on page 2.

IF YOU LIVE IN LEHIGH OR NORTHAMPTON COUNTIES AND ARE A DEMOCRAT, YOU CAN VOTE FOR AN OPENLY GLBT CANDIDATE IN THE PRIMARY

MEET SEN. KUKOVICH

State Senator Allen Kukovich from Westmoreland County is running for Lt. Governor, he introduced the hate crimes amendment in the State Senate. The community is invited to meet Sen. Kukovich on Thursday, April 4 at Candida's Bar at 12th & Chew in Allentown, from 7:30 until 9 pm. Committee hosts of the event are: PA-GALA, Candida, State Rep. Jennifer Mann, Liz Bradbury & Trish Sullivan, Allentown City Councilwoman Gail Hoover and Democratic State Committee candidates Steve Black and Allyson Hamm.

PA-GALA LARAMIE PROJECT BENEFIT A BIG SUCCESS

PA-GALA thanks the Theatre Outlet and all the volunteers for a great event. $1500 will go toward PA-GALA's efforts to pass the Hate Crimes Bill and PA-GALA will donate $1000 to Pride.

Valley Free Press does not discriminate on the basises listed in the anti-discrimination statement on page 8, and asks that organizations which request VFP to publish information about their events maintain a similar policy.

PLANET Parenthood

edited by Carolyn Lewis

PARENTING GETS ROSIER

Gay parenting has been in the news a great deal lately. First, the American Academy of Pediatrics made a formal statement in support of homosexual parents and adoptions. That is wonderful news for us. But, of course, we've known all along that we don't mess up our kids any more than anybody else! Statistically, kids of gay parents do experiment a bit more, and are more open to the idea of a "non-traditional" sexual orientation. However, I, for one, don't consider that to be necessarily a bad thing.

The conservative family organizations would have the world believe that our children are bed hopping willy-nilly just for fun. (Well, they believe it about us, it makes sense that our kids would be doing it, too!) But, before my children decide to make a lifetime commitment to another human being, I sincerely hope they will have thought it through completely and that they have considered their options. I hope they will have learned what a healthy relationship is and how to be a decent life partner. That is more important to me than the gender of the person they choose.

Then there's Rosie! I have always been a big Rosie fan, closet or no. In my opinion, she has been an excellent role model with regard to community service and philanthropy and motherhood.

Now that she has decided to put her mouth where her money is, toward eliminating the ban on gay parent adoptions, we just might see some progress in Florida and maybe other states as well. Rosie has taken some heat from the LGBT community for waiting so long to come out and misleading her audience with the "crush" on Tom Cruise. (Personally, I've always thought he was sort of pretty!) But, I think her timing was perfect. She waited until she had established herself as a strong leader, advocate, and parent. She essentially waited until her halo couldn't possibly shine any brighter. Now, she has nothing to lose. Not ratings or reputation. She can use her resources to effect change, and I am looking forward to watching it happen.

UPCOMING PRIDE EVENTS

Pride is pleased to announce Miss Tinsel Garland & Miss Robbie Star as your Pride Festival Main Stage hosts presenting live bands and female & male illusionists. Instead of a second "stage" this year, an "Unplugged Tent" will feature quieter musicians & performers, such as the LV Gay Men's Chorus. Details will follow as more performers are signed on.

Please watch for updates on the Film Festival & dance events. Come out to show your support at the events listed & watch for more as they are added.

FRIDAY, APRIL 12: Renegade, the current King of Pride will host a Pride Entertainment Benefit Blowout at 10:30 pm at Diamonz, featuring: Jayden (Dz. King 2001), Sebastian (Dz. King 2002), Miss Kitty (current Pride Queen), Mac Daddy, Christian, Mr. & Ms. Tri-City Leather, & the Diamonz Dolls. It will be an unforgettable night!

FRIDAY, APRIL 26: Miss Diamonz 2002, Breanna Allure to host a Pride Entertainment Benefit Show at Diamonz.

FRIDAY, MAY 17: Come watch the kings compete for the Pride King title when Sebastian (2002 Diamonz King) hosts the Pride King Competition at 10:30 pm at Diamonz.

The members of Pride have been very busy & continue to need new volunteers from the community. They recently held a large festival planning meeting & will be holding more soon. Their next one will be on April 2 at 7 pm at the FACT Office located on the corner of 12th & Chew Sts. in Allentown (next door to Candida's Bar). They rescheduled their regular board meeting to allow members to attend the critical Allentown City Council meeting on April 3rd. Please check Pride's website (www.pride-lv.org) for future meeting & event times or call 610-770-6200 or email info@pride-lv.com.

RAGS TO RICHES TAKE THE FIRST STEP

by Denise McKelvey

Dear Denise, Can you provide me with some income tax tips that I might be able to use right now or for the coming tax year?
Thanks, Mr. Procrastinator

Dear Mr. Pro, Just recently, one of my clients told me he was uncomfortable giving the charitable receipts from his gay organization donations to his tax accountant because he felt his accountant might be anti-gay. He changed to a local gay-friendly CPA and is much happier.

If you have a professional who prepares your taxes, be sure to be honest about your life, especially if you are in a relationship. A skilled tax person can help you save money, but they must know some of the ins and outs of income taxes, as they pertain to committed couples who cannot legally marry. Even your benefits can be taxed in a different way than legally married couples. Be sure you are completely comfortable with the person who does your taxes. If you aren't, find someone else.

Right now, you may still be able to squeeze in a few tax savers. If not for this year, then next. Contributing to an IRA may lower your adjusted gross income and trim your tax burden. If you contribute to an employer plan, the deduction may be limited.

If you borrowed money to finance the purchase of stock or other taxable income-generating assets, the interest paid on the loan may qualify as an investment interest deduction on Schedule A. You may be required to file Form 4952 to claim as well.

Work-related mileage and travel expenses are deductible only if your employer did not reimburse you through an accountable plan. If your employer included your reimbursement in your income on your W-2 and your reimbursement was less than the actual amount or less than the standard federal amount, you can file Form 2106 to claim the additional expenses.

Were you looking for a new job in your current or recent line of work? Certain expenses, such as employment agency fees, the cost of printing resumes, and transportation to interviews are deductible even if you did not take a new job. Deductible expenses are claimed on Schedule A.

Quick Top 10 Deduction List -- Still don't have enough deductions to itemize? Here is a top 10 list of specialized deductions you may have missed:

1. Medical and dental insurance premiums
2. Long-term care insurance premiums
3. Eye glasses and contacts
4. Mileage driving to the doctor, hospital or getting prescriptions
5. Out-of-pocket volunteer expenses, including mileage at $0.14 per mile
6. Union dues
7. Tax preparation fees
8. Safe deposit box fees
9. Certain repayments of income taxed in earlier years
10. Foreign tax paid if not claimed as a credit

Denise McKelvey is a Financial Advisor for American Express Financial Advisors, Inc. located at 7248 Tilghman St. in Allentown. Please mail your questions or send e-mail to <Denise.M.McKelvey@AEXP.com>.Information provided within this column may not be appropriate for your specific financial situation.

HOT NEWS

BARNES & NOBLE GLBT BOOKCLUB

Barnes & Noble GLBT book club meets in the cafe area at the Whitehall store at 7:00 PM. All are welcome! Here is the upcoming schedule: April 16 - Walking Home - A Woman's Pilgrimage on the Appalachian Trail by Kelly Winters, May 21 - The World of Normal Boys, A Novel by K.M. Soehnlein.

PFLAG MEETINGS

PFLAG LV -Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays: CALENDAR ALERT:
April 6 ,-- Monroe Cnty Meeting 3:00pm
April 14 -- Bethlehem Meeting 3:00 pm
April 16 -- Reading Meeting 6:30 pm
May 4- - Monroe County Meeting 3:00 pm
May 12 -- Bethlehem Meeting 3:00 pm
May 21 --Reading Meeting 6:30 pm
For information on these and other PFLAG events call: 610-967-5219.

ACC♀

ACCO : A Chorus Celebrating Women will perform a concert at Godfrey Daniel's on April 18, at 8pm. Call Godfrey's for ticket prices and reservations.

AHRC NETWORKING BREAKFAST

On behalf of the Allentown Human Relations Commission, the Alianza Latina of the Lehigh Valley, the NAACP Allentown Branch and Pride of the Lehigh Valley, community organizational leaders and activists are invited to attend: Community Networking Breakfast : "Preparing for Action," Wednesday, April 10, 2002 7:30 to 9:30 am. Commissioners Hearing Room, Lehigh County Government Center,17 South 7th Street, Allentown.

The forum follows up the engaging dialogue of the June 2001 networking breakfast where several concerns common to the City and School District were discussed. These include: Crime and Safety, Youth, Education Resources and Activities, Diversity Inclusion, Community Pride.Please reserve by Monday, April 8, 2002. For reservations or more information contact: Nicholas Butterfield (610-437-7616, Butterfield@AllentownCity.Org)

GLORA PLANS EVENTS

The Gay & Lesbian Organization of Reading & Allentown plans social events in the Lehigh Valley. For info write: GLORA , PO Box 1952, Allentown, PA 18105-1952 or email GLORAinPA@aol.com

FACT BINGO AT DIAMONZ

Carol Ann's Bingo for FACT, Every Sunday at Diamonz 7pm. This week the Progressive Jackpot is over $700! Carol Ann says, "Here's a chance to win big bucks, fun prizes and be part of the most fabulous Bingo game in the Lehigh Valley. See you Sunday!"

GLOSS GAME NIGHT

The next GLOSS (Gay and Lesbian Organized Sports Society) game night is April 20, same deal as always, EXCEPT, this one will be at Rob's place and will start at 6pm. For info and directions email Info@gloss.org or call 610-434-2966. (May's game night will be May 18).

MCC'S 2003 NFTMD

In order to build on the phenomenal success of this year's National Freedom to Marry Day service, MCCLV invites you to a Planning Meeting for the 2003 NFTMD service: Monday, April 15, 7 p.m., At the church, 424 Center Street, Bethlehem. Phone: (610) 954-7775

GLSEN MEETING

GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network)Greater Lehigh Valley had a very successful kick-off meeting in March. A sample of the teacher inservice program that the PFLAG-GLSEN Speakers Bureau provides to schools, was presented. The group brainstormed ideas and discussed how the Lehigh Valley GLSEN chapter could could make a difference in local schools and community.

The GLSEN invites all interested people to attend the the next meetings: April 8 and May 13 to be held at Muhlenberg College, Seagers Student Union-rms-108--109 at 7:00pm. For info call Carol 610.867 .6641 or e-mail <csbarron21@aol.com>.

GLBT PARTNER DANCE GROUP

The LV GLBT partner dance group is still in the planning stages. Several people have contacted the organizers to express interest. More people are needed. The plan of the group is to have lessons in various forms of partner dance (from swing to salsa) and to organize dances for practice and fun. If you are interested, email <fabio@early.com>.

MUHLENBERG DRAG BALL

All are welcome to Muhlenberg GSA 2nd. Annual Drag Ball on Friday, April 5, 8-12 p.m. Red Door Cafe in the Student Union Building, Muhlenberg College.Come in Drag or Just to Party, (but since it's a drag ball, the GSA suggests you come in drag!) Contact Sarah 484-664-6284 or Ed 484-664-4069 for details.

STEVIE Z

April Piano Performances: Saturday April 13th, 20th & 27th - Brick Tavern Inn, Quakertown, from 6:30-9:30PM. Call (215) 538-0865 for reservations. Friday April 26th - Mooselounge (Allentown), Piano sing-a-long from 9PM-Midnite. No cover charge - come out and have a nice time. Support Live Music! Support our Community!
Remember that 50% of tips go to a local charity. For March/April, the charity is "Pride of the Lehigh Valley".

MCC EVENTS

WELL ATTENDED CONCERT

Metropolitan Community Church LV hosted gospel singer Marsha Stevens on March 23. Stevens is an openly lesbian gospel singer who travels around the country giving concerts to MCCs . She is the composer of "For Those Tears I Died (Come to the Water)," which has been a standard in Christian hymnals since 1972.

75 people were in attendance as Stevens shared her music and her stories. One was about the backlash after her coming out as a lesbian. People across the country ripped out "For Those Tears I Died" from their hymnals and mailed them to her. But she found she was in good company - on the back of her hymn, people had also ripped out Martin Luther's "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God." It was a spirit-filled evening. For more information about Marsha Stevens, see her website at www.balmministries.com

LARGE CROWD ON PALM SUNDAY

90 people attended MCCLV's Palm Sunday service. The congregation was welcomed by a special danced processional and a dramatic reading was presented as preparation for Holy Week. Coordinating the dancers was Donnie Snyder and Marcia coordinated the dramatic readers. Participants included: Earl Beltz, Cathy Burgi, Dawn Ross, Diane, John, Wendy, Rich, Kevin Motroni, Kate, Lori, Les, DJ Landis with sign language by Margo and special music by Cris.

MCCLV MEMBERSHIP CLASS

April 7, 2002, 1 p.m. – 4 p.m. at the church Interested in MCC membership? Want to discover your spiritual gifts? See Dawn Ross to register or phone the church office at 610-954-7775.

BOOK STUDY

Starting in May, MCCLV pastor Rev. Beth Goudy will lead a book study on John Dominic Crossan and Richard Watts' book "Who Is Jesus? Answers To Your Questions About the Historical Jesus" (The book is short and clear and easy to read). Space is limited. If you are interested in taking part, please phone the office.

CALENDAR

ACCO-A Chorus Celebrating Women,
AIDS Outreach-112 N. 5th St. Allentown, PA 610.435.8424
AIDSWALK- AIDSWALK Lehigh Valley - 610.974.8701 www.regiononline.com/lvaids
ASC- AIDS Service Center 610.974.8701
As If Productions - Documentary Film Makers, 610.434.7845
BMA- Bucks/Montgomery Alliance for Gay and Lesbian Concerns 215-529-0360
B&N- Barnes and Noble Gay&Lesbian Book Club, White Hall store, Monthly, 7:00pm
BEARS.-1st Saturdays Monthly, 8pm, at the Stonewall, Moose Lounge 610-814-6916, Mtnbear@fast.net.
CIVIC and 19th St. Theater, 527 N 19th St, 610-432-8943, <.civictheater,com>
Enigma Players -- qacres@prolog.net
EQUAL! at Agere - email: equal@agere
FACT- Fighting AIDS Continuously Together 610.820.5519
GLEE at Air Products
GLASS-at Lehigh Univ., 610.758.3469
GLISN- at Dun & Bradstreet, <vagranthollow.com/GLISN/>
GLORA- Gay and Lesbian Organization of Reading and Allentown (Social gatherings, various dates) Newsletter- The Tassle. Write to: P.O. Box 1952, Allentown PA18105-1952, email-GLORAinPA@AOL.COM
GLOSS - Gay and Lesbian Organized Sports Society, P.O.Box 21862 Lehigh Valley, PA 18002 610.434.2966.
GLSEN-Gay, Lesbian, Straight, Education Network, 610-867-6641, csbarron21@aol.com
GMLV- Gay Men of the Lehigh Valley, 2nd Saturdays Monthly 7pm, 610.954.7775
HAVEN GLBT Youth Group of the UUC LV - call:610-868-215, email: havenyouthgroup @hitmail.com or zinnes@fast.net
HMFF-Hope Ministry Family Fellowship, Sundays, 11 am, Open Space Gallery, 931 Hamilton St. 610-791-0716
Integrity- Lesbian and Gay Episcopalians Family & Friends meet squarterly for fellowship and fun. 610-758-8642 or integritybeth@ mindspring.com"
KS-Kindred Spirits- Support, discussion, and social group for lesbians and bisexual women Contact : Chris at 610-868-0248, or Donna at610.997.00607
LVGMC -Lehigh Valley Gay Men's Chorus, email:lvgmc@hotmail.com, <www.lvgmc.org> phone 610-366-3320, rehearsals:: Wesley United Methodist Church, 2540 Center Street, Bethlehem
MCC - Metropolitian Community office-424 Center St. Bethlehem, 6 pm Sundays , 610.954.7775
NCC- Northampton Community College Gay Lesbian and Bisexual Student Union, call 610.861.5541(#1386) or 882-2531
19th St/Civic Theatre - 610.432.8943
Out There- Students at Cedar Crest College
PA-GALA - PA Gay and Lesbian Alliance for Political Action, (Candidate Info Booklet, & Political Lobbying) For membership: send $20 to: P.O.Box 20825 Lehigh Valley 18002 610.432.5449
PFLAG - LV Parents Families and Friends of Lesbians and gays 2nd Sundays 3pm at NCC, Coll. Cntr Rm 134 610.967.5219 <www.users.fast.net/~pflag>
Pride - Pride of the Lehigh Valley, (Pride Festival) 610.770.6200, email: <lvpride@hotmail.com>,<www.pridelv.org>
QuEST - Student group at Lafayette College Farion Center Box 429 Easton, PA, <QuEST_Lafayette@hotmail.com>

APRIL 2002

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 RAA	2 Atown City Council Mtg. on Ordiance	3 Atown City Council Mtg. on Ordiance	4 Kukovich event RAA	5 Muhlenberg Drag Ball	6 PFLAG M WDIY GLOSS
7 WDIY HMFF UUCLV MCC Bingo	8 GLSEN RAA	9 GLOSS LVGMC	10 HAVEN AHRC BREAKFAST	11 RAA GLOSS ACCO	12 PRIDE @ DIAMONZ	13 GMLV STEVIE Z GLOSS WDIY
14 PFLAG B HMFF MCC WDIY Bingo	15 MCC NFTMD MEETING RAA	16 LVGMC GLOSS B&N Bookclub PFLAG R	17 HAVEN	18 RAA ACCO GLOSS	19	20 WDIY GLOSS Game Night STEVIE Z
21 WDIY UUCLV HMFF Bingo HAVEN Forum	22 RAA	23 GLOSS LVGMC	24 HAVEN	25 RAA GLOSS ACCO	26 STEVIE Z	27 WDIY GLOSS STEVIE Z
28 MCC Bingo WDIY HMFF UUCLV	29 RAA	30 GLOSS LVGMC				

MAY 2002

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 HAVEN	2 RA GLOSS	3	4 WDIY GLOSS BEARS PFLAG M
5 MCC UUCLV HMFF Bingo	6 RAA	7 LVGMC GLOSS	8 HAVEN	9 LVGMC Concert RA GLOSS	10	11 GMLV WDIY GLOSS
12 PFLAG B	13 RAA GLSEN	14 GLOSS LVGMC	15 HAVEN	16 RAA GLOSS	17 PRIDE Kings @ DIAMONZ	18 WDIY GLOSS Game Night
19 Bingo	20 RAA	21 PFLAG R B&N Bookclub LVGMC GLOSS	22 HAVEN	23 RAA GLOSS	24	25 WDIY GLOSS
26 MCC Bingo WDIY HMFF UUCLV	27 RAA	28 GLOSS LVGMC	HAVEN	30 RAA GLOSS	31	

JUNE 2002 -- GAY PRIDE MONTH

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 WDIY GLOSS
2 MCC HMFF UUCLV Bingo	3 RAA	4 GLOSS LVGMC	5 HAVEN	6 ACCO RAA GLOSS	7	8
9 Bingo PFLAG B	10 RAA	11 GLOSS LVGMC	12 HAVEN	13 ACCO RAA GLOSS	14	15 GLOSS WDIY
16 Bingo HMFF UUCLV MCC	17 RAA	18 LVGMC GLOSS	19 HAVEN	20 RAA ACCO GLOSS	21	22 GLOSS WDIY
23 PRIDE FESTIVAL 30	24 RAA	25 GLOSS LVGMC	26 HAVEN MCC	27 ACCO RAA MCC GLOSS	28	29 LVGMC Concert

Quakers-Lehigh Valley Friends Meeting-Route 512 1/2 mi. North of Rte 22 Bethlehem, PA. Worship at 9:30 am. (610)691-3411.
RAA- Rainbow AA meetings, Mon. & Thurs. Episcopal Church, 16th & Turner Atown.
Ren- Renaissance Transgendered Assoc., PO Box 3624 Atown, PA 18016 610-814-5912/5913 racquel-lv@webtv.net
Rainbow Space - Muhlenberg College Organization 610.821.3244
Reading P-FLAG- 610.488.7533 or 670.8029
Safe Space- At Lehigh U. 610.758.3469
Saint John's Lutheran Church- A welcoming, gay affirming church, 32 S. 5th st. Allentown 610.435.1587
Softball-(Women's) call Diamonz, 610.865.1028
T.O. - Theatre Outlet-29 Nth 9th St, Allentown, 610-820-9270.
Unity-26 N. 3rd St. Emmaus, 767-4417
UUCLV - Unitarian Universalist Church of the Lehigh Valley, 424 Center Street, Bethlehem, 18018 610.866.7652.
VFP - Valley Free Press 610.432.5449, liztrish@aol.com
VYH - Valley Youth House for emotionally troubled GLBT youth 610.432.6481
WDIY - WDIY - 88.1 fm 93.9 fm Saturday 7:00 pm This Way Out, Assorted Women 7:30 pm. 610-694-8100.88.

SPECIAL UPCOMING EVENTS:

FACT BINGO@ DIAMONZ SUNDAYS
GLBT YOUTH GROUP HAVEN - WEDNESDAYS
LV BEARS - 1ST SATURDAYS
GAY MEN-LV - 2ND SATURDAYS
GLOSS VOLLEYBALL -TUES & THURS
GLOSS TENNIS - SUNDAYS
GLOSS RACQUETBALL -TUES & SATS
MCC EASTER SERV. - MAR 31
PRIDE MEETING - APR 2
CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE MTG ON ORDINANCE APR 2
CITY COUNCIL MEETING APR 3
SEN KUKOVICH@ CANDIDAS - APR 4
MUHELNBERG GSA DRAG BALL - APR 5
PFLAG MONROE -APR 6
MCC MEMBERSHIP CLASS - APR 7
GLSEN MEETING - APR 8
AHRC BREAKFAST - APR 10
RENEGADE FOR PRIDE @ DIAMONZ APR 12
STEVIE Z - APR 13
PFLAG BETHLEHEM - APR 14
MCC'S NFTMD MEETING - APR 15
PFLAG READING - APR 16
B & N BOOK CLUB - APR 16
ACCO CONCERT - APR 18
GLOSS GAME NIGHT - APR 20
STEVIE Z - APR 20
HAVEN FORUM - APR 21
MISS DIAMONZ BEN. FOR PRIDE @ DIAMONZ - APR 26
STEVIE Z - APR 26
STEVIE Z - APR 27
PFLAG MONROE - MAY 4
LV GAY MEN'S CHORUS CONCERT - MAY 9
PFLAG BETHLEHEM - MAY 12
GLSEN MEETING - MAY 13
PRIDE KING COMPETITION @ DIAMONZ -MAY 17
GLOSS GAME NIGHT - MAY 18
PFLAG READING - MAY 21
B & N BOOK CLUB - MAY 21
LV PRIDE FESTIVAL- JUNE 23
LVGMC CONCERT - JUNE 29

INFORMATION SUBJECT TO CHANGE. CALL TO CONFIRM
TO POST INFO: 610-432-5449
EMAIL: LIZTRISH@AOL.COM

DEM. STATE COMMITTEE CANDIDATES

Democratic State Committee is a volunteer position. The Committee consists of about 500 people from across the state and meets 4 times per year. The State Committee sets Democratic party rules and endorses candidates for Statewide Office.

Allyson and Steve are not running against each other. There are several committee members elected in each county. They hope to organize a GLBT caucus within the Democratic State Committee which will encourage the party and Democratic Candidates to address GLBT issues and concerns before endorsements are made. Educate and inform all members of the Democratic Party on our issues and work with GLBT political organizations across the state to increase our political effectiveness.

CIVIL UNION ANNOUNCEMENTS

To have your Vermont Civil Union listed here, or to get more information on how to get a Vermont Civil Union, email VFP at: < liztrish@aol.com>.

HIV TESTING

For free HIV counseling and testing: Allentown Health Bureau, 245 North 6th St. Allentown. 610-437-7742,

POINT O→ ←O COUNTER - POINT

BY STEPHEN LIBBY & JAN ELSASSOR

STEPHEN: Let's play the devil's advocate. Marriage is an antiquated notion. Two people expecting to meet each other's needs for the remainder of their ives? Fat chance. Hence the 49% divorce rate. So, it is rather puzzling why the (intellectually superior) GLBT population would desire to be part of this moldy institution.

That said, i would stand beside my gay brothers and sisters for their right to join in holy matrimony. I've always believed what I just wrote until recently.

Two things have changed my mind. 1) a romantic epiphany. and 2) the frightening story of a couple traveling across the US when one fell ill. The other was denied visiting his dying partner, by hospital staff, even to the very end of the patient's life. This couple had taken part in a commitment ceremony and had the appropriate legal documentation that they were each other's "next of kin". Still John could not be at James' side when he needed him the most.

The story #2 angers me because of #1. I want to be able to provide comfort to my partner, husband, lover. Some idealists suggest we create our own "new union". Revamp marriage and show those heterosexuals a thing or two about commitment. I do support the idea of creating a Gay Union, but we'll discuss that in a future article.

Opponents say "alternative" marriage has no place in the US, since marriage is based on the joining of one man and one woman for the purpose of making a family. And we all know that is the sole purpose of all heterosexual marriages (ex: Liza, Michael Jackson, Tom Cruise, etc.) And what the hell is so alternative about love? If the GLBT population were allowed to quietly settle into the neighborhood of marriage we could no longer be anyone's scapegoats. So, do I believe in gay marriage? I DO!

JAN: The Preamble to the Constitution states that the our government is founded to "promote the general welfare." To do so, the government-in its federal and state levels-passes laws to improve its citizens' lives.

Prohibitive laws are passed to discourage behavior detrimental to the general welfare. For example, robbery is outlawed and so-called "vice taxes" are applied to behaviors such as smoking to discourage their practice. Similarly, proactive laws are passed to encourage certain behaviors. Roth IRAs, for example, were created to encourage saving. Marriage is a behavior that the state has historically sought to promote, because it provides a building block for society as a whole. Because society benefits when people form covenantal relationships, the government gives that favored behavior special benefits.

It is time for our government to extend that favored status to same-sex couples. The government should do it for two reasons. First, gay men and lesbians who form couples also benefit society and should be encouraged. Same-sex couples, like heterosexual couples, buy homes, provide stable environments for the rearing of children, and engage two people in a lifestyle of mutual support that lends itself to the support of the society as a whole.

Second, by not providing the same benefit to same-sex couples, the government actually destabilizes the public welfare. Depriving gay men and lesbians the right to marry, discourages the formation of family units, leaves children of same-sex couples potentially defenseless at the death of the legal parent, and forces a segment of society to navigate multitudes of legal hurdles to be certain that loved ones are protected and cared for.

The government should legalize same-sex marriage not because it benefits our community. That would be special interest politics. The government should support same-sex marriage because it promotes the general welfare by creating a more stable society.

What's That About?

Readers write or email "What's That About" editors with questions about gay and lesbian issues.

Dear What's That About: I've read the movie "A Beautiful Mind," about schizophrenia suffering mathematician John Nash, cuts references to Nash's homosexuality. Was it cut? Why? Does it matter? **Signed Cinema Verite?**

Dear CV: Nash's homosexuality was cut out of the movie because, according to director Ron Howard (from the Advocate 4/2/02): Nash's long relationship with his wife was a main focus of the movie, the homosexuality issue confused that theme. Howard was also worried that people would link homosexuality with schizophrenia. And Nash says he wasn't gay.

Yet, it is a fact that the biographical book "A Beautiful Mind," by Sylvia Nasar, on which the movie is based, mentions homosexuality issues 30 times. Most importantly Nash was arrested for "public indecency" in a men's restroom early in his career. As a result, he lost his national security clearance and his job at the Rand Corporation. The movie rewrites history making Nash's battle with schizophrenia the reason for those losses.

The movie makes much of Nash's courtship of his wife Alicia in reality it was she who courted him. The movie also conveniently leaves out that Nash was divorced from Alicia for decades. They only remarried last year. Most interesting is that along with the 1.5 million dollars Nash received for the story rights to his life, he demanded in the contract that no mention of homosexuality be made in the movie. So Ronnie Howard's insistence that he was worried viewers might equate homosexuality with schizophrenia is somewhat tainted.

The influence homosexuality had on Nash's life was left out of the movie. Does it matter? We think so.

Hollywood has been de-gaying history for too long. Whether it's simply leaving out key storylines from books - The Color Purple, Crossfire, Fried Green Tomatoes - or whether it's rewriting the biographical details of peoples lives - Michelangelo, Cole Porter, Hans Christian Anderson - it effectively erases our struggles and our existence in general. The fear of being "the only one," is often the first fear a GLBT youth feels. That fear could be lessened by simply portraying the world as it is. Even more significantly, if we allow society to maintain the myth that GLBT people do not exist, we perpetuate a big reason for denying GLBT people equal rights. There is no need to give rights to a group that isn't there.

HAVEN GLBT YOUTH EVENTS PLANNED

HAVEN will be hosting a breakfast forum at the Unitarian Universalist Church of LV (424 Center St., Bethlehem) at 9 am on April 21.The format is designed to answer questions about the program. HAVEN is also planning an evening Open House event.

HAVEN's youth members are currently planning a spring semi-formal dance & hope to be involved in this year's Pride Festival.

HAVEN meetings for GLBT & questioning & allied youth, between the ages of 14-20 are held every Wednesday from 7-9 pm at the UUCLV and are facilitated by trained adults. For more info or to make a donation, please call 610-868-2153 or email: <havenyouthgroup@hotmail.com>.

INTERNATIONAL PRIDE THEME

The International Pride Theme has been announced it is: "Pride Worldwide"

SCOTT SAYS

By Scott Laubner

AT THE EXPO

On Saturday March 16, I went on an excursion to New York City with eight friends. The purpose of the trip was to see the 9th International Gay & Lesbian Business and Entertainment Expo at the Jacob Javits Convention Center.

This is the third year I have visited the expo and it is always interesting to see which businesses participate. The Expo is a place where Commerce meets Queers, where Green meets Pink. Banks like Fleet,First Union and Citibank courted gay customers. The British Tourist Authority, the Provincetown Tourist board, Europe on Rail, and the West Hollywood Convention and Visitors Bureau told conventioneers of the good times to be had at their respective locations.

Southern Comfort and Jack Daniels were there giving out free samples in case people had never heard of or tasted them before. The New York City Police Department was there with employment applications. United and Continental Airlines competed for gay business. Verizon duked it out with Midtown Cellular for a piece of gay phone action. I saw booths for two fledgling gay & lesbian TV channels.

After looking at over a hundred different vendors and displays (including a Winnebago full of puppies), I had to think this expo speaks volumes about the power of gay dollars. It was like the vendors were saying, "Hey, Big Spender! Spend a little time with me." But it's not sweet charity these companies are after, it's cold hard cash.

More and more businesses are coming to realize that being a friend to the GLBT community means big bucks.

I had a great time. I look forward to next year and maybe you, my little chipmunk readers, can come along too. (It's worth it just for the puppies.)

LV GAY MEN'S CHORUS ENCORE

The Lehigh Valley Gay Men's Chorus will presnt an encore preformance of "The Sound of Music (and Other Noises)" at the Raven in New Hope at 8:30pm on May 9. For information and reservations call: 610-366-3320 or email: <lvgmc@hotmail.com>.

LV GAY MEN'S CHORUS JUNE CONCERT

In 1997, conservatives in Colorado attempted to tighten discriminatory language in state law. Composer Dick Gallagher and lyricist Mark Waldrop replied with the song "Color Out of Colorado" that begins:

"In state after state the legislature
wants to regulate human nature;
in short, from sea to shining sea
they'd like to tell you who to be.
They can pass all the statutes that they please,
acorns won't grow into apple trees;
besides, those differences that they hate
are the strength that made this country great."

This will be on the musical program when the Lehigh Valley Gay Men's Chorus present their next concert, "In the Neighborhood", at 8:00 on June 29, at Wesley United Methodist Church in Bethlehem. The concert will feature works by composers as various as Duke Ellington and Francois Poulenc, Gustav Holst and Holly Near. Other timely selections will include "Johnny's Gone Marching", a familiar tune with its roots in the tragedy of the Civil War, and a setting by the chorus's director, Jay Kawarsky, of Walt Whitman's poem "I Dream'd in a Dream" which speaks of the poet's vision:

"In a dream I saw a city invincible
to the attacks of the rest of the earth."

Further information about this concert and about the Lehigh Valley Gay Men's Chorus is available on their website at lvgmc.org.

A VIEW FROM A DYKE

By Liz Bradbury

PASS THIS BILL

The Amendment of sexual orientation, gender, and gender identity to the Allentown Human Relations Ordinance has been introduced by Gail Hoover, seconded and moved to committee. This ordnance protects people from employment, housing and public accommodation discrimination. It will be discussed in a public committee meeting on April 2nd. The meeting begins at 7:00 PM. Then we believe it will be voted on by City Council on April 3rd. That meeting begins at 7:30 PM. If it passes GLBT people will have legalcivil rights in this part of the part, for the first time.

We encourage everyone in the community to come to both these meetings. We must be sure that the Bill is not held up or voted against in committee, and we must show Allentown City government that this amendment has wide-based positive support.

Currently, there is no federal or PA state law that protects you from discrimination based on your sexual orientation or gender identity. Everyone is at risk.

You do not have to live in Allentown, or even work in Allentown to be effected by this ordnance. Anyone seeking services, going to restaurants, stores or even hospitals will be protected from discrimination in Allentown by this ordiancne. Passage of this Bill in Allentown, will facilitate similar Bills in Bethlehem, and other parts of the Lehigh Valley.

YOU DO NOT HAVE TO LIVE IN ALLENTOWN TO BE AFFECTED BY THIS ORDINANCE

People with HIV /AIDS are protected from discrimination by the American Disability Act, but someone who wants to discriminate against PWAs can simply do so now based on their sexual orientation. This Bill will protect PWAs.

In fact, you do not even have to be gay to be at risk, all someone who wants to discriminate against you has to do is say you are gay, they do not have to prove you are gay.

If you are part of the leadership of a community group or organization, please encourage the members of your group to be there.

Please bring your friends, your kids, your parents and grandparents.

If you happen to be a clergy member please come in your clergy clothes and come early so that you can sit in the front seats. In fact we are asking everyone to come early. If you are a veteran, police officer, firefighter, EMT, etc., please, consider wearing your uniform.

You will not have to speak, you will not have to do anything but sit there and wear a button that we will provide that says "equal rights."

We know that there are anti-GLBT people who are trying to organize anti-amendment groups to be in the room. We can overcome them by shear numbers, for every one of them, there must be 40 of us. We have an excellent chance of winning but we must show the City Council that there are hundreds of people who want this Bill to pass. We are citizens, taxpayers, voters, young and old, gay and straight, all races and ethnicities. For your family, your friends and your selves, please come to the meetings on the 2nd and 3rd.

We cannot afford to lose, because if we do, it will be years before this can come up again. If you need more information or directions please call us at 610-432-5449 or email: <liztrish@aol.com>.

TRISH'S COLUMN

By Patricia Sullivan

THEY GET CAUGHT... SO THEY BLAME US

Religious organizations and private clubs are not required to follow anti-discrimination laws, or potentially any statutory requirements, if the organization adopts a "moral position" that is different than the law. Organizations like the Boy Scouts, the Salvation Army, and churches fall into this category of special rights. This kind of rule gives an unlimited power to these organizations to insulate themselves from legislation and permits these groups to perpetuate prejudice.

Gay men and lesbians are frequently the focus of "moral judgments" that perpetuate discrimination and prejudice. One of the most heinous acts that is perpetuated against the gay community is the accusation that homosexuals are pedophiles. Even though, all available research, data and clinical experience indicates that gay men are no more likely than heterosexual men to sexually abuse children. In fact significant data indicates they are less likely to so so.

Men who sexually abuse boys are unlikely to be homosexual. Rather, according to the American Psychological Association, they are attracted, entirely or predominately, to children. A study of 175 adult males who had been convicted in Massachusetts for sexual assault of a child, found that 47% were exclusively interested in children, 40% were regressed heterosexuals, and 13% were regressed bisexuals. None had an exclusively homosexual orientation, and none of those who were bisexual were primarily attracted to men.

A study of sexually abused children treated in a one-year period at a Denver children's hospital, found that less than one percent of the identified adult offenders were gay or lesbian. Of 219 abused girls, only one instance of abuse was attributed to a lesbian. Of 50 abused boys, only one instance of abuse had been attributed to a gay man. In contrast, 88 percent of the offenders had documented heterosexual relationships and most were heterosexual partners of a family member (77 percent of those who abused the girls and 74 percent of those who abused the boys).

MEN WHO SEXUALLY ABUSE BOYS ARE UNLIKELY TO BE HOMO-SEXUAL

The presumption that homosexual men are pedophiles is contrary to legitimate research. Moreover, according to the American Psychological Association, assertions to the contrary by Family Research Council (FRC) and others, cannot be considered reliable. They (FRC) mischaracterize research and rely on dubious sources. Their presumption that homosexual men are pedophiles is contrary to the legitimate research in the field.

Recently a Morning Call headline read: "Vatican deals with scandal by cracking down on gays." The Vatican (Catholic Church) has chosen, in the face of scientific evidence disputing their position, to vilify and condemn a whole class of people, rather than accept responsibility for not dealing appropriately with the problem of sexual abuse by priests under their supervision. The Catholic Church has long ignored the mandatory reporting requirements of the civil law. This choice by the church leadership has had far reaching consequences, not the least of which was to implicitly foster a safe haven for pedophiles. The ideal haven, in fact, where one can be assured that no one will report these criminal actions to the civil authorities. One in which superiors will take every measure to protect the perpetrator, including paying off accusers, and relocating the perpetrator to a new unprejudiced setting.

For years the Catholic Church has avoided any "scandal" by paying attorneys and writing settlement checks on the condition that the victims remained silent. Then the priests implicated in the abuse cases were quietly transferred to other churches. And although some received "treatment" they eventually returned to another parish and contact with children. One must ask, why did the Church pay so many settlements, one of which was for 30 million dollars, if their actions had been responsible?

Pedophilia is a crime. The act of keeping these crimes secret and protecting the abusers, is a crime. And now, the Church is trying to cover-up its own mishandling of sexual abuse by maligning gay men. And that is a crime.

POP QUIZ

1. Rosie O'Donnell's partner is named____.
A. Chelsey B. Kelly C. Mary D. Rosanne

2. Rosie has ___kid /s. A.1 B.2 C.3 D.4

3. The gay penguins at the N.Y. Aquarium are named _____. A. Fred & Barney B.Adam & Steve C.Curly & Moe D.Wendell & Cass

4. What couple recently made a $50,000 donation to the Human Rights Campaign?The __.
A. Clintons B. Gores C. Bushs D. Cheneys

5. Gosford Park's characters were fictional except _____, who was an openly gay actor of the period.
A. Ivan Balabon B. Ivor Novello
C. Cecil Crane D. Noel Coward

6. Who recently said on MTV : "Condoms are a way to prevent infection...therefore I support their use."
A. Rudy Gulliani B. Colin Powell
C. Tom Ridge D. Condalisa Rice

7. On the front of Harvey Fierstein's new CD he's wearing a____. A. bikini B. boa C. flag D. cape

8. What TV drama had an episode in whch the fear that Walt Whitman would molest kids was the plot?
A.Gunsmoke B.Dr. Quinn C. Bonanza D. Kung Fu

9. What historical writer penned that Abraham Lincoln's relationship with Joshua Speed, "had a streak of lavender and spots soft as violets."?
A. Carl Sandberg B. Larry Kramer
C. Gore Vidal D. James Michner

10. What nights must everyone in the community come out in order to support the passage of the amendment of sexual orientation and gender identity to Allentown's Human Relation's ordinance?
A. April 2 for the committee and probablyApril 3 for the vote. See pages 1 & 7.

1.B 2.C 3.D 4.B 5.B 6.B 7.C 8.B 9.A 10.A

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We believe it would improve the quality of life in the Lehigh Valley if all people were equally protected from unfair discrimination based upon actual or perceived: race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry or place of birth, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, marital status, family status, age, disability, or use of a guide animal, in the areas of employment, housing, and public accommodation.

PA-GALA

Valley Free Press

Allentown Human Relations Commission

Safe-Space of Lehigh University

PFLAG Lehigh Valley

ACCO - A Chorus Celebrating Women

GLORA

Pride of the LV

LV Gay Men's Chorus

NCC GLBT Student Union

The Lehigh Valley Labor Party

EQUAL! at Agere

Metropolitan Community Church LV

OutThere - Cedar Crest

9th Street Shelter Allentown

LV Community Action Committee

GLEE at Air Products

FACT

AIDS Outreach

The Unitarian Universalist Church LV

GLOSS

LEPOCO

GLISN of Dun & Bradstreet

AIDS Services Center

Theatre Outlet

Integrity - Bethlehem

The Lehigh Valley Religous Society of Friends (Quakers)

Civic Theater 19th Street Theatre

The Latin Alliance

The Enigma Players

New Covenant Family Ministries

Properties of Merit

Allentown City Democratic Committee

Episcopal Diocese of Bethlehem

To add your organization to this list, call 610-432-5449 or email VFP (liztrish@aol.com).

QUOTE #1

"Dad was an Irish Catholic deacon and a Chicago homicide detective, mom was a lay Catholic minister, and my dad had said anti-gay things in front of me when I was a child. I told them [I was gay], they cried, they got over it. And if my parents could get over it ... so can yours."
-- Syndicated advice columnist Dan Savage, Feb. 1.

QUOTE #2

"I get tired of these straight actors in gay roles who say, 'Oh, I'm really cool, and it doesn't bother me, but just so you know, I'm straight.' If it's really not an issue, then why are you talking about it?"
-- Valarie Rae Miller, Original Cindy on TVs "Dark Angel," to Girlfriends magazine, February issue.

QUOTE #3

"If I want to hear a great voice, I'll listen to k.d. lang. My voice is not particularly appealing to me."
-- Cher, to the New York Daily News, Feb. 18.

QUOTE #4

It takes a lot to become a foster parent... You have to really want to save a child who others have deemed unsaveable. And for the state of Florida to tell anyone who's willing, capable and able to do that, that they're unworthy, is wrong.
— Rosie O'Donnell talks about being a gay mom in an interview with Diane Sawyer on ABC News Primetime Live March 14.

Distelfink©

by Ruby Zebu 04/02

"Those without legal rights are the easiest to blame!"

Heterosexual divorce increases: Syndicated Columnist Michael McManus blames homosexuals.

Sept. 11 terrorist attacks: Falwell and Robertson blame homosexuals

Scandalous cover-up of pedophile priests is exposed: Church blames homosexuals

Margorie Knoeller's dog kills Diane Whipple: Knoeller's lawyer blames homosexuals.

At the City Council meeting on Apr. 2, Half the anti-amendment people will blame homosexuals for all the ills of the world. The other half will insist we don't need the law because we aren't really discriminated against.

The editorial columns and political cartoon that appear in Valley Free Press express the opinions of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion or attitude of this publication. VFPmakes no indication of the sexual orientation of persons, organizations, or businesses mentioned in any issue.